

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

بِسْمِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَنَصَّالٍ عَلٰى رَسُولِ الْكَرِيمِ

# THE Moslem Sunrise

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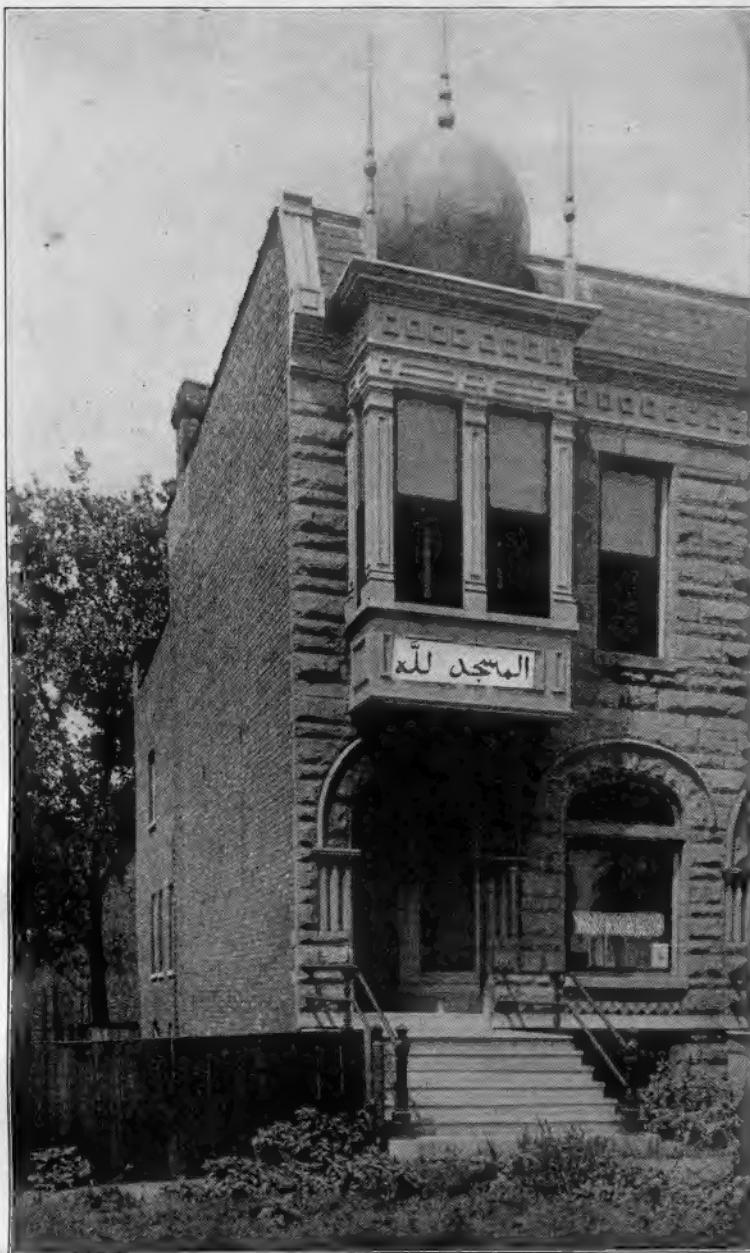
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*The Abmadiyya Moslem Mosque in Chicago*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
إِذَا الَّذِينَ عَنْ دِرْرِ اللَّهِ لِلْأَسْلَامِ

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## Four Verses from the Holy Quran

### Transliteration

Tabaraka-smu Rabbika zil Jalaali wal-Ikram. (LV-78)  
Wa Ilahukum Ilahun wahid La-ilaha Illa huar-Rahmanur-Raheem. (11-163)

Fa lillahil hamdu Rabbi-ssamaawati Wal ardhi Rabbil alameen.  
Wa lahul kibriya-u fi-ssamaawati Wal-ardhi wahu-al azeezul Hakeem. (XLV-36-37)

### Translation

Blessed be the name of thy Lord, the possessor of glory and honour.

And your God is one God! There is no God but He. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Therefore, all praise belongs to God, the Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, the Lord of the worlds.

And unto Him (alone) belongeth glory in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

من احاديث الرسول

## The Sayings of the Master Prophet Muhammad

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet said, "The five daily prayers are like a fresh river which runs by the door of one's house. He who washes himself in it five times a day will keep perfectly clean." (Muslim)

Abu Huraira relates that the Holy Prophet said, "He who goes to the mosque in the morning and in the evening, will be blessed with hospitality in paradise likewise."

Abdullah-Ibn-Busr reports that a man said to the Holy Prophet, "Oh, Prophet of God, the laws and the commandments of Islam are beyond my comprehension. Tell me something to which I can hold fast. The Holy Prophet replied, 'Let thy tongue utter the name of God unceasingly.'" (Tirmudhi)

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet said, "God is pleased with those who offer thanks unto Him after eating and drinking." (Muslim)

It is related on the authority of Ibn-Masud that the Holy Prophet said, "Oh people, Speak not ill of others unto me. When I come from home to your meetings, I love to come with my heart open towards you all." (Tirmudhi)

Abu Huraira reports that the Holy Prophet said, "The man who calls people to the truth will receive blessings from God, as much as all those accept it through Him, in addition to the rewards of his own actions." (Muslim)

It is related on the authority of Abu Musa that the Holy Prophet said, "God extends His hands of mercy at night that those who sin in the day may repent and turn to Him at night; He extends His hands of mercy in the day that those who sin in the night may repent and turn to Him in the day." (Muslim)

# The Lode-Star

*(Excerpt)*

By HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD  
**THE PROMISED MESSIAH AND MAHDI**  
 (1836-1908)

The teachings of the Holy Quran and the instructions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are divided into three steps.

The first is intended to turn savages into men and to instill into them notions of human proprieties; the second is to raise them from the stage of natural humanity to that of moral beings; and the third is to elevate them from the moral stage to the stage of spiritual union with God, where they may enjoy His nearness, approbation and love.

When this stage is reached there is annihilation and effacement, and all signs of a separate existence and a separate will are completely obliterated, and there is left only one absorbing sense of Divine Presence, the single transcendent presence that is to remain after the dissolution of the Creation. This is the final stage of progress for every God-seeking individual, be he man or woman, and hereto converge all the different systems of religious exercise. Here ends the journey of the saints.

This is the stage referred to in the term "Istiquamat," which occurs in the opening chapter of the Holy Quran. Here are finally quenched under Divine Command all the passions and desires which burn in the lower-self of man. Here is the whole citadel finally conquered. The rabble of passions and desires cease their din and the question is asked, "To whom does the Kingdom belong to-day?" and the answer comes, "To the God of Glory and Greatness."

But far otherwise is the case with the stage of morals and good conduct. In that stage there is no security against the enemy during the unguarded moments of spiritual strife, because for those who have not yet passed beyond this stage there still remains to overcome many a stronghold difficult to conquer and they have to live in the constant fear of a sudden overwhelming assault by their lower-selves when the appetites have been made more furious by prolonged abstention. Such

men can never lead a life altogether free from lust and impurities nor can they ever be secure from the assaults of their passions.

**Miraculous Character of the Holy Quran** Such are the teachings of the Holy Quran. They lead men to perfection both in knowledge and practice. These teachings are indeed so advanced that none of the previous Divine Books were deemed fit to propose or propound anything like them. They amount, in fact, to a miracle of wisdom and achievement. They make the Holy Quran a standing miracle for all times in the eyes of the world. The miracles of the previous prophets are all dead and gone, but this miracle of the Holy Quran will stand till the last day. Such claims on behalf of the Holy Quran are not mere figments of our imagination lacking a basis in actual facts.

There is the most irrefutable evidence in their support and the most convincing and compelling arguments substantiating their truth. Its miraculous wisdom is evident from the fact that it contains all the principles and teachings, all the facts and arguments required by man for his search after God. Its teachings are perfect. It furnishes all the arguments necessary for the establishment of truth and the refutation of falsehood. In the manner and method of its exposition of the higher spiritual truths it leaves nothing to be desired. And withal it sets forth all these teachings and commands and prohibitions in a way which is at once most eloquent and sweet and charming. This is an achievement which is certainly beyond the power of man.

Next, as for its miracle of achievement, as much as of wisdom, the fact is equally plain and obvious and admits of no denial or doubt. The Holy Quran has indeed surprised many of the most intelligent thinkers by the wonderful effect and unique change it has wrought in the lives of its followers, by the extraordinary illumination it has caused in their minds, by the complete eradication it has effected of long-established evil customs. It scaled the walls of crooked and perverted nature and made its way into the secret chamber of the heart of the hard-hearted. It crossed the deep and wide moats of carnal lives and reached to those who lived behind those barriers. For it, through God's intervention, the most difficult works were made easy, distances were obliterated, narrow, selfish minds were broadened and enlarged and every obstacle was removed,

till at last truth was made manifest and its devotees gradually came to receive clear revelations and visions and the seed of perennial miracles was sown in their hearts. This is why when questioned about miracles, we have no need to refer to bygone ages for instances of them, but even from our own place can show to the sceptic ever-fresh examples of such miracles.

On the other hand there is with our adversaries nothing but legends of the past. Such legends can never prove the truth of any religion. The truth of a religion can be known only by the light of signs which never cease, nor ever lose their flavor. Thus the miracle of the Holy Quran is like a tree with two branches both of which are of great majesty. These diffuse their fragrance all round and crowds of people are gathered to bear testimony to their worth, just as they gather round the Holy Temple at Mecca during the days of the pilgrimage.

Imagine for a moment what an amount of pain the greatest philosopher will have to undergo in order to cure the perversion of a foolish or ignorant mind or to change the habits of a vicious life. The work will well nigh prove impossible for him. Try, then to realize the greatness of the man, which in a few years reformed thousands of men and turned them from vice to virtue, eradicated their disbelief, adorned them with the qualities of truthfulness and probity, till the light of piety illuminated their hearts and the love of God was made manifest in their faces and they were fired with zeal for the service of their faith and traversed the earth from east to west and from north to south inviting men to Islam and the religion of Muhammad. Their minds were enlightened with Divine knowledge and their intelligence was sharpened to understand the Divine mysteries and love of God and hatred of evil became a part and parcel of their nature. Thus gradually they came to reach the stage of the upright and the blessed after they had once been sunk in the grossest idolatry.

In the service of Islam they spared themselves no pains until they carried it to the farthest corners of the then known world, of Persia, China, the Roman Empire and Syria. In short, they reached all those lands where idolatry had spread its sway and paganism had established its power. They did not quail in the presence of death and did not yield even by an inch when threatened by the sword of the tyrant. They were staunch in battle and rushed to meet death for the sake

(Continued at bottom of Page 8)

# Is Man Born Free?

By

**HAZRAT KHALIFATUL-MASIH II**

(Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Qadian, India)

It is an article of our faith that as far as human actions are concerned, man is neither wholly free nor wholly bound. He is free to the extent that he deserves to be rewarded or punished for his good or bad deeds, and he is bound in so far as he cannot exceed the limits set by God. God does not pre-destinate anyone good or bad; rather He bestows guidance on man before the period of actions begins; and when it begins, He guides him as well as brings about the results of his actions. Hence, whatever appears to be predestined, is really the result of an act of free will; and every act, which appears to be the result of free will is in a fact determined by the laws of nature, the man's previous actions and his environment. Consequently, different schools of philosophy have, from times immemorial, been fighting over the question as to whether man is free or not. This problem has baffled men in all ages. But if people had kept in view the teachings of Islam, there would have been no such wranglings at all or they would have come to an end very soon. A man is indeed forced to the conclusion, if he only casts a cursory glance over his actions, that they are governed at one and the same time by what may be termed the law of free will and the law of predestination. On the face of it, it appears to be a problem of theoretical interest only, but as a matter of fact, it is a vital issue of vast practical importance, and on it depends to a great extent the social and spiritual progress of the world. This problem im-

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of God. They were a people who never fled before an enemy. They carried their victories to the remotest ends of human habitation. Their genius was put to test and their fitness to rule was brought to the proof. In every field of human enterprise they came out victorious and they proved themselves masters in all departments of knowledge and achievement. This fact alone amounts to a miracle on the part of the Holy Prophet and a clear proof of the truth of Islam.

plies the existence of God also, for the question of man's freedom of action is so intermingled with the question of his limitations, that none but an Omniscient Being can weigh the true worth of his actions, without which there can be no equitable reward or punishment. In fact, it is impossible to judge a man's actions without a true knowledge of his powers and limitations. There are thousands who are looked upon as virtuous people, not because they possess any virtue but because they are incapable of doing an evil and the people do not know it. On the other hand, there are thousands who are looked upon as iniquitous, while they are really virtuous, as they have to face many temptations and are fettered with a great many restrictions but still they carry on the fight, sometimes losing and sometimes coming out successful in the conflict. It follows therefore that if human actions have ever to discard the veil of hypocrisy, and appear in their true colour, then there must be a Being who knows the interior and the exterior, the past, the present and the future equally well, and is thus able to judge humanity with justice and equity.

## “Fa’Jr Azan”

(The Moslem Call to Morning Prayer)

By R. EARL BARCLAY

*Allaho Akbar!*

God is the greatest of all!

The dawn is rising in the East,  
With golden flags unfurled,  
Gilds dome and arch and minaret,  
Paints home and grove and parapet  
Of all the Moslem World.

*La-ilaha il-lallah!*

To God alone is worship given!

Upon the towering minaret,  
The Muezzin stands out  
Above the Mosque in the city square,  
Sends forth the morning call to prayer,  
Along deserted streets.

(Over)

*Muhammadur Rasul-lallah!*  
Muhammad is God's Prophet!

On couch of silk and bed of sand,  
The Faithful hear the call;  
And shaking from their eyes the sleep,  
The rich, the poor, the strong, the weak,  
All heed the call to prayer.

*Hya alas Salat!*  
Come to Prayer!

The beggar in his door-way stirs,  
The rich man rises too.  
Forgetful now of slumber sweet,  
They fill each avenue and street.  
It is the hour of prayer.

*Hay alal-falah!*  
Come to success!

Beneath the mosque's high lifting dome,  
They kneel in humble prayer:  
Before the tasks of every day,  
The Faithful bow to God and pray.  
The morning hour of prayer.

*Allah-o-Akbar!*  
God is the greatest of all!

Each of the Faithful kneeling there,  
Knows the power of God  
To smooth the way, make sweet the hours,  
To give success or fame or powers  
To Faithful hearts in prayer.

*La-ilaha il-lallah!*  
None may be worshipped but God!

More musical than clarion bells,  
Or Angelus at eve,  
Or Temple bells of Mandalay,  
Or whanging gongs of all Cathay,  
The Moslem call to prayer.



# Islam Promotes World Unity, Peace and Progress

**Chaudry Zafarullah Khan, B. A., LL.B.  
(Lond.), M. L. C., Bar-at-Law, Punjab, India. Formerly President of The All India Moslem League. Member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy of India**

**Summary of the address given to the 2nd Parliament of Religions organized by the World Fellowship of Faiths at Chicago (U. S. A.) during August and September, 1933.**

Islam: "Peace, through complete surrender to God's will," the faith revealed through all the Prophets; Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha, Ramchandra, Krishna, and, in its complete and final manifestation through Muhammad (on all of whom be peace and the blessings of God!).

It eliminates all discord and brings about a complete reconciliation between (a) God and man; and (b) man and man.

(a) By teaching the Unity of God and explaining His attributes it instills into the human mind such a conception of beauty, beneficence and majesty of the Creator as to steep the mind in an all enveloping atmosphere of love, reverence and awe for God, thus making a complete submission of the human will to God's will as the only true and unfailing source of joy and happiness.

(b) This is really working out in detail only one aspect of (a). Under this heading Islam lays down guiding principles for the adjustment of the relationship between: (1) the sexes; (2) the members of a family; (3) members of society; (4) master and servant; (5) Capital and Labor; (6) the State and the citizen; and (7) one State and another. By so doing

it seeks to eliminate every element of discord from every aspect of human relationship and to establish perfect peace.

It fosters the conception of peace and concord by its very name; Islam, Peace, Submission to the Divine will, which again is perfect concord and thus perfect peace. The Moslem greeting is: "Peace be unto you;" and every Moslem man, woman and child throughout the world promotes an atmosphere of peace and goodwill by greeting every fellow Moslem whom he or she may meet or from whom he or she may part during the course of the day, with this greeting of "peace," at once a prayer and a salutation, and when greeted himself replies: "And unto you be peace."

Islam has taught and in practice has achieved a complete equality of mankind. "The supreme gift of Islam was the ideal of unity which it drilled somehow into the heads of a hundred races—not merely the unity of God, but even more the unity of mankind." (*This Believing World*, by Lewis Browne.) A single visit to a mosque (Moslem place of worship) would furnish a living picture of this unity and equality which it would be impossible to match anywhere else.

Again, Islam has set at rest the age-long conflict between Science and Religion. It teaches that both proceed from a Divine Source: Religion being based on a direct revelation through the Word of God, and Science being indirect Revelation through the work of God, and that thus there can be no real conflict between them. In fact, one complements the other. Again and again does the Holy Quran (the Word of God) draw attention to the phenomena of nature (the work of God) to illustrate and emphasize its teachings and there are numerous exhortations enjoining the study of and a research into these phenomena for the purpose of a complete understanding and realization of the relationship of man to God.

All of this would show that there is a divine design for peace and unity underlying the Universe, and whereas provision has manifestly been made for it on the physical side, a parallel provision has been made on the spiritual side. On the physical plane we can clearly perceive that as the result of an astonishing development in the means of transportation and communication and other facilities, the various sections of mankind are fast tending to become, as it were, members of one family. It behooves us, therefore, to recognize this Divine Purpose and to constitute ourselves the instruments through which this blessed purpose may be fulfilled. That it will be

fulfilled cannot be open to the slightest doubt; it is for us to choose whether it shall be fulfilled through us or in spite of us. All that tends to obstruct this purpose, to raise fresh barriers between mankind or to preserve old ones, will be swept away; all that tends to promote this purpose and to bring it to its fulfillment shall be blessed and fostered.

In the same way the Divine Grace and Mercy has made provision for the spiritual unity of mankind. While the human race was still in its infancy and sections of it were widely scattered over the face of the earth, communication between them being difficult and infrequent, spiritual guidance was provided for each section locally through men beloved of God whom He made the spokesman of His will. As contact between mankind was about to be fostered, He revealed His will through Muhammad, the Master Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings of God!) in the Holy Quran, which describes itself as a "testimony" and a distillation of the Holy Scriptures previously revealed, a law unto all time and for all peoples of the Earth.

And one more promise remained to be fulfilled. Many of the great Prophets (on whom be peace!) had under Divine revelation held out a promise to their followers that in the latter days they would appear again to lead mankind back to the truth. But the moment we realize that Revealed Truth has always proceeded from one Source, we must at once understand that all these Second Advents of the various great Prophets must be fulfilled in one person, who would come in the Spirit of all these Prophets (on whom be peace!). And these promises have been fulfilled in advent of Ahmad of Qadian, a servant of the Master-Prophet Muhammad, whom God has called "The Divine Champion clothed in the Mantles of the Prophets" (on all of whom be peace and the blessings of God!). In him may the Hindus recognize Krishna, the Jews and the Christians recognize the Messiah, the Moslems find the Promised Mahdi and all other creeds their own particular Prophet. Again, the Divine Purpose must be fulfilled and mankind brought together through Ahmad. It is for us to decide whether we shall be the instruments for the fulfillment of this purpose, or shall set ourselves to obstruct and fight it.

"Oh Lord do Thou of Thy infinite mercy and grace cause us to be of those through whom Thy will shall find its fulfillment and save us from falling into the error of obstructing Thy will and purpose. Amen."

# When History is Fiction

## Did the Moslems Burn the Library of Alexandria

By  
**SUFI M. R. BENGALEE**

Voltaire said, "History is disfigured by fable, till at last, philosophy comes to enlighten man; and when it does finally arrive in the midst of this darkness, it finds the human mind so blinded by centuries of error, that it can hardly deceive it; it finds ceremonies, facts and monuments, heaped up to prove lies." This seems to be particularly true with regard to the western history of Islam. Many fantastic stories concerning Islam have gained currency in the west and pass for historical truths. The readers of the Moslem Sunrise will remember that some time ago, a set of books called the Standard History of the World were declared false by a Chicago court for inserting some of the fairy tales of the Arabian Nights as history of Islam. In this article, we propose to bring to light another such fictitious story which is accepted as an historical fact in the occidental world. I mean the story of the burning of the Alexandrian Library by the Moslems. The anecdote of the alleged burning of the library runs as follows:

At the time of the capture of Alexandria by the Moslem General Amr (Amr-Ibn-Al As), John the Grammarian, a famous philosopher contracted friendship with the Moslem chief and was in high favour with him. The philosopher solicited the conqueror the precious gift of the royal library which remained to be appropriated by the captor. Amr told the savant that it was beyond his power to grant him the request, but promised to write to Omar, the caliph. Omar is alleged to have replied that if these books contained the same truths as the Quran (Koran), they were of no use since the Quran contained the necessary truths; on the other hand, if these writings were contrary to the Quran, then they were pernicious and ought to be destroyed at once. Thus Omar sent order to his general to destroy the library under any circumstances. The order was executed with rigid and blind obedience. The Library was burned. The vast number of the volumes were distributed among the four thousand public

baths of the city and for six months they served to supply the fires with fuel.

The following noteworthy facts help us in arriving at the truth about the fable.

First: The story of the destruction of the Library of Alexandria by Amr was first told by a Christian historian Abdul Fragius, *six hundred years after the alleged occurrence of the episode*. Before he appears on the scene with his story there is no mention at all of this myth. Whereas the minutest details of the conquest of Alexandria by Amr have been faithfully recorded, all the historians, both Christian as well as Moslem, are conspicuous by their mute silence on this point. This is exceedingly significant.

Second: It is an incontestable, historical fact, that, inspired by the lofty ideal set before them by Muhammad, "Seek knowledge even though it be in China." "The word of wisdom is the lost property of the believer. He takes it wherever he finds it," the followers of Islam furthered the cause of science and education all over the world. When Europe was wallowing in intellectual darkness, it was the Moslems who kept the torch of light and knowledge aloft. It was they who nurtured philosophy and science and paved the way for the modern civilization. If the Greeks were the "father" the Arabs were the "foster father" of science and philosophy and "through the Arabs and not through the Latin route, that the modern civilization received that gift of light and power." In the face of such glorious traditions, it would be the height of fanaticism to attribute an act of such vandalism to the early Moslems who were men of surpassing tolerance and were devoted lovers of letters and learning.

Third: It should be noted in this connection that if such had been the bigotry of the Moslems, then this mischievous spirit would have found an outlet or expression somewhere else. They had much better chances nearer home for burning the sacred books of the Christians and the Jews who were their vassals. But no such charge has ever been leveled against them.

Fourth: Abdul Fragius states that the volumes of paper were distributed among the four thousand baths of Alexandria. So huge was the number of books, that it took six months for their consumption. In those times books were not written on paper but on papyrus or vellum which did not make

for fuel. The author of this fable shows appalling ignorance of the elementary facts of history.

Fifth: History conclusively proves the utter falsity of this pure fiction. There were two libraries at Alexandria—one at Bruchion and the other at Serapim. The one at Bruchion quarter which was the larger of the two was connected with the Museum and served as a sort of academy. During his attack, Julius Caesar set fire to his ships in his self-defence; the fire spread to the Bruchion quarter and destroyed the celebrated library.

The disgrace of the pillage of the library at Serapim eternally belongs to the Christian emperor Theodosius. In 389 or 391, he passed an edict concerning the pagan monuments and according to this order, the Christian Bishop Theophilus destroyed the library at Serapim. So, there existed no library to be burned by the Moslem General Amr at the time of his conquest of Alexandria.

There is a host of western historians who have frankly admitted that the story of the burning of the library of Alexandria by the Moslem General Amr is an ignominious lie. The following quotations which support our claim are of interest:

*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume II, The Modern Library Edition, by Edward Gibbon, pages 754-755: "For my own part, I am strongly tempted to deny both the fact and the consequences. The fact is indeed marvelous. "Read and wonder," says the historian himself: and the solitary report of a stranger who wrote at the end of six hundred years of the confines of Media is overbalanced by the silence of two annalists of a more early date, both Christians, both natives of Egypt, and the most ancient of whom, the patriarch Eutychius, has amply described the conquest of Alexandria. The rigid sentence of Omar is repugnant to the sound and orthodox precept of the Mohammedan casuists: they expressly declare that the religious books of the Jews and Christians, which are acquired by the right of war, should never be committed to the flames, and that the works of profane science, historians or poets, physicians or philosophers, may be lawfully applied to the use of the faithful . . . I shall not recapitulate the disasters of the Alexandrian library, the involuntary flame that was kindled by Caesar in his own defence, or the mischievous bigotry of the Christians who studied to destroy the monuments of idolatry. But if we gradually descend from the age of the Antonines to that of Theodosius, we shall learn from a chain of contemporary witnesses that the royal palace and the temple of Serapis no longer contained the four or the seven, hundred thousand volumes which had been assembled by the curiosity and magnificence of the Ptolemies."

*History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, by John William Draper. D. Appleton and Company, 1925 Edition. Pages 103-

104: "But it must not be supposed that the books which John the Labor-lover coveted were those which constituted the great library of the Ptolemies, and that of Eumenes, King of Pergamus. Nearly a thousand years had elapsed since Philadelphus began his collection. Julius Caesar had burnt more than half; the Patriarchs of Alexandria had not only permitted but superintended the dispersion of almost all the rest. Orosius expressly states that he saw the empty cases or shelves of the library twenty years after Theophilus, the uncle of St. Cyril, had procured from the Emperor Theodosius a rescript for its destruction. Even had this once noble collection never endured such acts of violence, the mere wear and tear, and perhaps, I may add, the pilfering of a thousand years, would have diminished it sadly. Though John, as the surname he received indicates, might rejoice in a superfluity of occupation, we may be certain that the care of a library of half a million books would transcend even his well-tried powers; and the cost of preserving and supporting it, that had demanded the ample resources of the Ptolemies and the Caesars, was beyond the means of a grammarian. Nor is the time required for its combustion or destruction any indication of the extent of the collection. Of all articles of fuel, parchment is, perhaps, the most wretched....but we may be sure that the bath-men of Alexandria did not resort to parchment so long as they could find anything else and of parchment a very large portion of these books was composed."

*The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, Vol. I-II. Page 570: "The story of the destruction of the library by the Arabs is first told by Barhebraeus (Albulfaragius), a Christian writer who lived six centuries later; and it is of very doubtful authority. It is highly improbable that many of the 700,000 volumes collected by the Ptolemies remained at the time of the Arab conquest, when the various calamities of Alexandria from the time of Caesar to that of Diocletian are considered, together with the disgraceful pillage of the library in A. D. 389 under the rule of the Christian bishop, Theophilus, acting on Theodosius' decree concerning pagan monuments."

*The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, Vol. XV-XVI. Page 546: "The usual statement that from the date of the restoration of the Brucheum under Cleopatra the libraries continued in a flourishing condition until they were destroyed after the conquest of Alexandria by the Saracens in A. D. 640, can hardly be supported. It is very possible that one of the libraries perished when the Brucheum quarter was destroyed by Aurelian, A. D. 273. In 389 or 391 an edict of Theodosius ordered the destruction of the Serapeum, and its books were pillaged by the Christians. When we take into account the disordered condition of the times, and the neglect into which literature and science had fallen, there can be little difficulty in believing that there were but few books left to be destroyed by the soldiers of Amr. The familiar anecdote of the caliph's message to his general rests mainly upon the evidence of Abulfaraj, so that we may be tempted to agree with Gibbon that the report of a stranger who wrote at the end of six hundred years is overbalanced by the silence of earlier and native annalists . . . ."

*Mahomet the Illustrious*, by Godfrey Higgins, Esq., pages 68-69: "The Christians have made a great outcry against all the followers of

Mahomet on account of the destruction of the library at Alexandria, the acts of one . . . , a disgrace to his religion and the literary character of his Arabian countrymen, *if, indeed, he did burn it*; but they carefully keep out of sight the circumstance that part of the celebrated library of the Ptolemies was burned in one of the battles of Caesar, and that another part, if not all the remainder, was burned by a decree of the Christian Theodosius, when he burned and destroyed throughout his dominions the temples of the heathens for the glory of God.

No doubt these pious acts of legitimacy of both the Christians and Mahometans had considerable effect in producing the darkness of the succeeding ages, but there were two or three other causes much more effectual. The acts of Omar only extended to one city and one moment of time; but the repeated decrees of the Roman Christian emperors for the destruction of books of both heretics and philosophers, and the canons of the Councils and Popes of Rome, and the denunciations of the fathers of the church against the wickedness of reading the books of the Heathen, were, I have no doubt, much more effectual. They extended to the whole world . . . . I must fairly say, for my own part, founding my opinion on the arguments used by Mr. Gibbon, I do not believe it. It is nothing but a Christian calumny, to blacken the religion

. . . . .

## Opening of the Mosque

25, Lambolle Road, N.W. 3.  
August 1, 1934.

To: The AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT in ISLAM, CHICAGO.  
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islam:

Peace and the mercy and blessings of God be unto you.

It has given me very great pleasure to learn that the house owned by the Mission on the South Side of Chicago has now become available to you for use as a Mosque and as the Headquarters of your Mission. I have also learned with very great pleasure from our dear friend and brother, Sufi M. R. Bengalee, of the zeal and enthusiasm which all of you have displayed in preparing the house for the purposes of a Mosque. I have no doubt that it has all been a labor of love and that it will be amply rewarded by the expansion of your work as well as by the additional opportunities that the building is bound to afford to you for cultivating a deeper attachment to your faith and stronger fraternal bonds between yourselves. No Moslem community can continue to exist as such without a Mosque and it affords me great happiness to know that this first necessity of a Moslem community has been supplied in your case. I feel that it is only through God's special grace that you have been vouchsafed this favor of possessing, in a city like Chicago, a place where you may freely congregate at all times and seasons to worship your Creator in your own fashion without fear of molestation or interference. I pray that God may of His grace and mercy enable everyone of you so to use the opportunities afforded by this Mosque as to lead you nearer and nearer to a true communion with your Creator so that in

each of you the Divine purpose of human life may be fulfilled to the fullest degree. I also pray that from this centre shall radiate in each direction over the vast and great continent of America, the light of God's true revelation so that in that great continent all men may in the fullness of time come to recognize and acknowledge the one God and to be reconciled and come to be at peace with Him. Amen.

Your Humble Brother in Islam, Zafarullah Khan.

**CHICAGO DAILY TIMES**  
Tuesday, August 21, 1934

**ISLAMITES DEDICATE FIRST  
MOSQUE HERE WITH SOL-  
EMN RITES**

Chicago's first mosque, a church of Islam, will be opened with dedicatory services Friday night at 4448 Wabash ave.

Charles F. Weller, head of the World Fellowship of Faiths, and Charles Samuel Braden of Northwestern university will be among the speakers representing various religious and races.

The church will be in charge of Sufi M. R. Bengalee, young, green-turbaned, black-bearded Moslem cleric.

**6,000 Moslems Here**

With headquarters at 56 E. Congress st., Sufi (the title means having attained purity) Bengalee has conducted the Ahmadiyya movement of Islam in this country for six years. There are 6,000 Moslems in Chicago, he said, some of them converts from Christianity.

His movement seeks to uplift humanity and establish peace throughout the world, according to the aims of its founder, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, "the promised Messiah and Mahdi and the expected Messenger of all nations." He died in 1908.

Sufi Bengalee pointed out Mohammed's religion is incorrectly called Mohammedanism. It is Islam and its derivation means peace and resignation.

**Blames Woes on Unbelief**

Had the United States been living under the economic dictates of his re-

ligion, the Sufi declared, the depression could not have occurred.

Distribution of wealth through inheritance laws, the prevention of concentration of wealth by division of losses between capital and labor and the religious compulsion for fixed almsgiving he declared to be practices that would, without communistic or socialist influence, bring well-being in a land of plenty.

"The followers of Islam do believe that actual words of God came unto all the Biblical prophets," he said.

**Pray 5 Times Daily**

"But unfortunately the extant Bible does not contain those exact words of God. The history of the Bible reveals that the existing Bible was committed to writing from various sources covering many, many centuries and underwent great changes, interpolations and corruptions."

The young missionary correlates the Bible with Mohammed's teachings however, his religion seeing the fulfillment of many Israelite and Christian prophecies in the person of Mohammed.

In Chicago Moslem worshipers during their five daily prayers face not directly east but a little south, for geographical reasons.

**THE CHICAGO DEFENDER**  
September 1, 1934

**OPEN NEW MOSLEM MOSQUE  
IN CITY**

"The Moslem World Today," and "Islam and Science," were two of the interesting topics discussed as offering

a solution of world problems today at the auspicious opening of the Islam Mosque, 4448 S. Wabash Avenue, Friday evening. A record crowd was present at the first meeting and the mosque was opened under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

Many noted speakers appeared on the program, among whom were Charles Frederick Weller, head of the World Fellowship of Faith; Prof. Charles Samuel Braden, Northwestern university; Brother Omar Khan, Miss Sumiyeh Attiyyeh and Robert R. Barclay. The services were led by Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee, head of the Moslem Movement in America.

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**THE CHICAGO HOME NEWS**  
**September 8, 1934**

**MOSLEMS WHO OPEN MOSQUE  
HERE EXPLAIN THE  
PRINCIPLES**

**The Moslems**

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam opened a mosque at 4448 S. Wabash ave., August 24, last. Services were led by the famous Moslem leader, Sufi M. R. Bengalee, M. A. Mr. Charles F. Weller, the head of the World Fellowship of Faiths, and Professor Charles Samuel Braden of the Northwestern university, and Brother Omar Kahn, Miss Sumayeh Attiyyeh. Dr. H. Tarbell was among the speakers. Delegates from different cities participated in picturesque Moslem services.

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded by Hazrat Ahmad, the promised Messiah and Mahdi and the expected Messenger of all nations. In the spirit and power of all the earlier prophets he came to serve and interpret the final and eternal teaching laid down by God in the Holy Quran. The Movement therefore represents the True and Real Islam and seeks to up-

lift humanity and to establish peace throughout the world. Hazrat Ahmad died in 1908, and the present head of the Movement is his second successor Hazrat Mirza Bashirud-Din Mahmud; under whose directions the Movement has established missions in many parts of the world.

This Movement is a worldwide movement and has been spread throughout the length and breadth of the United States. It seeks to solve the world problems and bring about the worldwide human unity.

The Islam religion which the Movement truly represents inculcates absolutely uncompromising monotheism—belief in one God. The Moslem formula of faith is "There is none worthy of worship, but one and the only God (Allah), who possesses all excellences and Muhammed is His prophet." Furthermore, Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God and to realize Him during our earthly life as our Helper in all our affairs and undertakings.

**Belief in Prophets**

Islam requires belief in all the prophets and spiritual guides, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Budha and Confucius. Islam represents the completion of the mission of all the prophets from the earliest dawn of history; that in fact all the prophets of God came with one and the same mission. Thus Islam establishes peace between all religions.

The establishment of universal brotherhood without any discrimination of cast, creed, color or country, is the unique and unrivaled distinction of Islam. Islam has not only propounded, but fulfilled and realized the splendid principles of universal brotherhood in the actual life and action of human society. Islam has made kings out of slaves and has established right relationship between man and man.

**THE CHICAGO AMERICAN**  
August 29, 1934

**MOSLEM CHIEF HERE TO  
OPEN MOSQUE**

A mosque for Chicago Moslems will be opened tomorrow at 8 p. m. at 4448 S. Wabash ave., under the direction of Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee, head of the Ahmadi-Moslem movement in America.

The initial meeting will be a public gathering at which Charles F. Weller, head of the World Fellowship of Faith, and Dr. Charles Samuel Braden of Northwestern University are scheduled to speak.

Thereafter, five prayer sessions will be held daily in keeping with the Moslem tradition. At tomorrow night's meeting people of all races and faiths are expected, as well as Moslem delegates from other cities.

Dr. Bengalee said Chicago has about

6,000 Moslems, followers of what is wrongly termed "Mohammedanism." He is the missionary of the faith here and will have charge of tomorrow night's gathering, explaining the tenets and practice of the Oriental religion.

**THE CHICAGO DAILY NEWS**  
September 1, 1934

**DEDICATE NEW MOSQUE HERE  
FOR ISLAM FAITH**

People of many races and faiths were present last week as Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee, leader of the Ahmadiyya movement in the United States, opened a mosque of the Islam faith at 4448 South Wabash avenue. Charles Frederick Weller, head of the World Fellowship of Faiths, and Dr. Charles Samuel Braden of Northwestern university were among the speakers at the dedication of the edifice.

## Press Notice

**CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE**  
Friday, May 25, 1934

**MUEZZIN'S CALL TO FAITHFUL  
OF ALLAH IS HEARD IN  
CEDAR RAPIDS; ISLAM  
MISSIONARY HERE**

Sufi Bengalee Comes From Place  
Where Brother Of Gazette Man  
Is Christian Missionary;  
Tells Views

By Ray F. Anderson

A melodious chant sounded toward the east one evening this week at 342 Fifth avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, the home of Sam Allick, Syrian grocer.

Plaintive, insistent, compelling, stirring—the "muezzin" calling to prayer in Arabic with the sacred formula which interpreted is:

"God is great,—There is but one God,—Mohammed is the prophet of God,—Prayer is better than sleep,—Come to prayer!"

Visions of possible sky-piercing minarets atop a mosque of Islam in Cedar Rapids came to the reporter as he watched members of some twenty Moslem families of this city at worship.

The "muezzin," a "priest" of Allah, an Indian with bright, green colored turban from The Punjab, province of India, a missionary to America, is the only missionary in behalf of Islam in the United States. His name is Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee and his headquarters are in Chicago.

**Eyes Aflame With Zeal**

An interesting and cultured chap, is this Sufi Bengalee, with eyes aflame with zeal for Islam and the prophet Mohammed.

The "demonstration" in the Allick home was at the request of the reporter who was curious regarding this oriental faith and form of worship. Gladly the missionary of Islam went through

the different rituals, explaining in detail the significance of each. Not only for the reporter, did he do so, but also for those of the Islam belief in Cedar Rapids who for many years have been without a "minister."

Most of them are Syrians and practically all of the heads of families were born in the shadow of Damascus or of Jerusalem. During the years they have maintained their religion, although some of them, even as some of their Christian neighbors, have become a little rusty in their observances. This is the second journey of Sufi Bengalee among them and they come to him for instruction and revival in the forms of worship dear to the heart of a true Moslem.

For the reporter's benefit, four Syrian friends, following the missionary's lead repeated the Arabic symbolisms and performed the obeisances which included the touching several times of the forehead to the floor in token of complete subjection to Allah.

#### **Strange Coincidence**

And this reporter's thought went to his own blood-kin brother, now on furlough, a Presbyterian missionary to the Indians of the Orient in the very same community from which Sufi Bengalee hails.

Here an Indian of indubitable intelligence and ability seeking converts in Christian Cedar Rapids and there an eastern Iowa American of like qualifications seeking to carry to Sufi Bengalee's neighbors the "glad tidings" of the Christ. It's a funny world!

This missionary for Islam was sent to the United States five and a half years ago by the Ahmadiyya Movement at Qadian, Punjab, India. The "movement" was founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, "the promised Messiah and Mahdi and the expected Messenger of all nations." Ahmad was to Mohammed as Jesus was to Moses, according to Sufi. He went to the Moslem heaven in 1908 and the present head of the

movement is his second successor, Hazrat Mirza Bashirud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. This man has established missions in many parts of the world.

Sufi Bengalee seeks converts, he says, and also he desires to clear up "some of the misunderstandings" about the faith of Islam. He talks English fluently and clearly and his choice of words reveals the scholar. He was graduated from the University of Calcutta and received his master's degree from the University of the Punjab at Lahore.

He can quote the Quran (Koran) at length and he is familiar with the Christian Bible

#### **Says Bible Human Document**

The Bible of Christianity and Judaism is but a human document to this native of India wheras the Quran is the exact and literal word of God as revealed to Mohammed in Arabia 1,352 years ago. "Not a dot has been changed" throughout the centuries, according to him.

The Islam faith includes belief in "all of the prophets of God," not excluding those of other religions such as Jesus, Confucious, Budha, Krishna, Abraham and Moses. Asked if it included the Mormon prophets, Sufi hesitated momentarily and then repeated that Islam accepts all of the prophets of God.

And that suggested a question about polygamy and harems. Plural wives are permitted in Islam, Bengalee said, with restrictions and under certain conditions for the good of society and humanity but the practice is not general. And a harem, it seems in the proper sense of the word, is an apartment exclusive to women of the home as differentiated from a similar exclusive apartment for the men. Not necessarily does a harem mean an apartment for more than one wife.

#### **Women Have Economic Equality**

Sufi Bengalee discoursed at length re-

garding the status of women in Islam. They are equal with men, he said, in economic life as well as socially. For, example, a daughter at a parent's death, shares with a son in the estate and an Islam wife holds absolute title to all property that was hers before marriage and all that subsequently comes to her.

Furthermore when a Moslem takes a wife he (not her father) must give her a mahar (dowry) which remains her individual property even though they are divorced.

Thus Islam protects women by assuring them economic independence. And all economic ills such as those besetting the world today would be impossible if Islam were a universal faith, according to the missionary from India. He described how the Quran forbids usury and lending of money for interest. He told of "Zakat," a system of "poor tax" amounting to two and a half per cent expected from each Moslem owning more than he needs for his personal maintenance.

#### Is In Earnest

Many things are interesting about this man and his faith. One may not be-

lieve as he does and one may not accept all that he claims as the "gospel truth," yet one cannot help but be certain that he is in earnest. He tells a story to the effect that Jesus did not die on the Cross but was taken down while unconscious and hidden by His friends in a tomb where they restored Him to health with lotions and medicines.

Then, according to Sufi Bengalee's belief, Jesus escaped hostile Judea in disguise and went into India where he died at the ripe old age of 120 years. Bengalee shows a picture purporting to be the tomb of Jesus at Khan Yar street, Srinagar, Cashmere, India

Universal peace is an objective of Islam, according to the Indian missionary, and perhaps that is one reason why the Prince of Peace has been appropriated.

As a person listens to the Moslem philosophy with its economic and social ramifications and its all embracing scope, including a temporary hell, one cannot escape the conclusion that it truly is shrewd religion.

Thus was this writer impressed by Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee, the only missionary of Islam in America.

## Islam and Brotherhood

By OMAR CLEVELAND

The teaching of Islam is of incalculable importance. The spirit of peace, toleration and brotherhood of man is its dominant note, the very foundation of human conduct and the bulwark upon which humanity rests.

Islam is an ethical code based on enduring truths. No power of man can destroy or impair its foundation. Its policies, unlike most religions are neither fallacious in principle,

nor a failure in practice, and once we grasp its simple truths, its depth and appeal, it will forever be enshrined in our hearts.

It has the vision of the soul and proclaims the oneness of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful—the vision which false fears and false hopes dim not, and is the broad highway through which alone true brotherhood may be attained.

Islam endeavors to inspire the spirit of brotherly love as a universal principle, furthermore it is the proclamation of universal kinship, the central theme that has given it strength and permanence.

This Islamic brotherhood has linked Moslem countries together where all other religious systems have failed. In it there is a unity that holds its own despite racial, political or spiritual strains.

Moslems are thoroughly religious and this religious attitude is directly to Allah. It is the very fabric of Moslem life and thought, for here the heart finds assurance, certainty, security.

Western civilization in all its phases has come to bear upon the East with its economic brutality and its worship of material comfort, as well as its contempt for spiritual realities. While it has shown marked advance in other respects; the false ideals of life, incitement to drinking, gambling and sensuality and the cynical attitude toward the sanctities of life remain unchanged.

Doubtless this may prove to be an important contribution and innovation to Islamic education. And the responsibility for that development lies largely on Moslem schools—or schools after Eastern models—in the West.

To this end, later generations will have just cause to exalt the magic formula of Islam, whose faithful "Cease to be conscious of self and are conscious only of Allah."



## Arabia Under Ibn Saud

By  
**SUFI M. R. BENGALEE**

The dramatic rise of the famous Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the present monarch of Arabia, has captured the imagination of the people all over the world and aroused their intense interest.

Ibn Saud belongs to the Royal Family of Riyadh in Nejd, which is situated in Central Arabia. During his childhood, all the powers of his father, Abdur Rahman, passed out of his hands into those of his former vassal, Ibn Rashid. The family was compelled to migrate and settle in Kuwait, on the Persian Gulf, and live under the bounties of Ibn Rashid as his pensioners. More than a quarter of a century ago, Ibn Saud launched his career of wresting the lost powers of his family from the usurper with an extremely slender following, and carried out his task against overwhelming odds. Now he has become the supreme master of the greater part of Arabia and enlisted not only the unflinching loyalty and devotion of the entire people of his realm, which extends over as large an area as that of Italy, France and Germany combined, but also compelled admiration from all the world.

The rule of Ibn Saud marks the beginning of a new epoch of progress in his country. Before he appeared on the stage of modern Arabia, the country was notorious for the Bedouins who plundered caravans. Travel in the desert was fraught with grave dangers and perils. During his short reign, this enlightened ruler has achieved magnificent success in establishing domestic security, and thus rendered an inestimable

service, not only to his country, but to all humanity. Today you can travel in the vast desert of Central Arabia in complete security and without the fear of molestation. A writer in the "Atlantic Monthly" says, "After a few difficult years, the movement caught hold. A miracle occurred. The Kingdom of Ibn Saud, as big as France, Germany and Italy put together, now enjoys a security that so-called civilized countries of the West cannot begin to duplicate. In the broad deserts of Arabia, where nobody ever dared travel unarmed in the old days, a visitor can now go quite alone, unarmed, laden with gold, and encounter no danger." (August, 1929). Still another writer, Ameen Rihani, in his book, "Maker of Modern Arabia," says on page 218, "Indeed, there is more security in the desert of Arabia today than there is in the big cities of Europe and America."

Traveling in Arabia is of stupendous importance. Vast numbers of pilgrims from all the four corners of the globe, flock every year, to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and perform the pilgrimage with extreme religious zeal. Since the good old times, traveling has been conducted in the most antique fashion. The camel, the "ship of the desert" was the chief means of transportation. Hence travel in Arabia was most arduous. Having established domestic security and peace, this thoroughly modern ruler reorganized the system of pilgrimage in the interests of the pilgrims. He introduced motor-transport which enormously added to the comfort of the pilgrims. Furthermore, he greatly improved the water supply in the principal pilgrim ports, erected shelters with medical attention on the hot and dusty road to Arafaat and made adequate quarantine arrangements in a measure which exceeded all expectations.

Ibn Saud's work did not end here. He introduced great reforms in the realm of communications. He maintained and extended the wireless system of the old Hashimite regime and completely reorganized and enormously improved the postal, telegraphic and telephonic administration.

Ibn Saud thoroughly realized the tremendous necessity of improvement in education among the Bedouins for the uplift of his people and for speeding progress in his country. To this end, he sent scholars and preachers to the various tribes to bestow upon them the blessings of education and to expound to them the philosophy of true religion. The result was that

the Bedouins who were formerly Moslems only in name, became the zealous defenders of the faith. Thus Ibn Saud has done a great work in the cause of education and rendered an invaluable service to his people.

Bedouins were accustomed to live a nomadic life. Ibn Saud keenly felt that this mode of life was a stumbling block to progress and civilization, so he launched a campaign of preaching to the Bedouins the advantage of settled life. In order to accomplish success in this noble task, he resorted to various skillful methods, in the initial stages of transformation. He assigned to them land, built for them houses, planted palm trees and helped them with money, grain and food. Within a comparatively short period, he succeeded in persuading a large section of his Bedouin population to adopt the mode of settled life and converted them to agriculturalists. The movement is still progressing by leaps and bounds. The cultural significance of this work of Ibn Saud is incalculable and his name will be recorded in the annals of history among those who have contributed to human progress.

The strength of Ibn Saud is to be noted in his masterly grasp of foreign affairs. A born diplomat and a farsighted statesman, he has adroitly handled the intricacies of difficult situations. He showed his real genius in concluding the momentous treaty of Jeddah in 1927 with Great Britain, in which the latter had to recognize the absolute independence of Hedjaz and Nejd. This progressive monarch has succeeded in establishing his relations with all the foreign powers on a cordial and friendly basis. At the same time, he has been able to win and retain the confidence of the entire Moslem World, because not a jot or title of the independence of the holy land has been sacrificed.

Ibn Saud has put into practice the principle that justice is the foundation of good government. Throughout his kingdom, his name has become almost a byword for justice, for he exercises it without any favoritism or partiality.

In his book, "Maker of modern Arabia," Amin Rihani tells a lively story which sheds a strong light upon Ibn Saud's justice. The story runs as follows:

"When we were in Ojair we needed quantities of wood and the Bedu, knowing of the scarcity and the need as well as the exceptional circumstances—a conference and English guests—took advantage of the situation.

One of those woodmongers with four camel loads stopped one day before the tent of the Chief Steward and asked two rupees a load. The ordinary price is half a rupee. They bargained, the cameleer and the steward, without raising their voices and the price was reduced to a rupee and a half. The steward refused to buy. The woodmonger drove his camels away. The steward called him back, a rupee a load? No, five rupees for the four loads? No, Wallah. Life to Abdul Aziz, you will give me six.

Were they bought? No. Were they requisitioned? No. And we needed wood for the coffee and the kitchen fires. "Baud of the Badwei," cried the Chief Steward, as the cameleer switched his camels and walked away behind them. "Were it not for the Shiokh (Ibn Saud) I would have chastized him. I can imagine what would happen if a Turkish general were camping at Ojair and his army needed wood. But, were it not for the Shiokh, the Chief Steward would have acted like a Turk." (page 216)

This is how Ibn Saud established justice, peace and order in his kingdom. His name is on every tongue. He has won the hearts of the people. Their love for him is spontaneous, deep and genuine.

How has this man achieved such a miracle? By administering the code of the Holy Quran, which he enforces with stern impartiality.

"A tree is known by its fruits." Such is the magic effect of the Holy Quran. If the principles of the Book of God were applied in the so-called civilized countries of the West, these vexed problems would be solved and the much needed peace would reign supreme.

This is Ibn Saud, the present king of Arabia. He lives a life of austere simplicity. His private life is absolutely devoid of luxury. A friend and comrade of his people, he is addressed by them by his first name, Abdul Aziz, without any title, and he eats with the chauffeur and with ordinary men of the street. It has been truly said that such an enlightened and progressive ruler has not ascended the throne of Arabia since the palmy days of the Moslems in the twelfth century. He will leave an indelible mark on the pages of history as one of the great benefactors of the human race and as one of the most romantic and picturesque figures of all time.

# Muhammad, The Modern Prophet

By

**Khan Bahadur Abul Hashem Khan Choudhury, M.A.**

"O Lord, Shower Thy Mercies upon Muhammad and upon the followers of Muhammad even as Thou showered Thy Mercies upon Abraham and upon the followers of Abraham; verily Thou art the Possessor of Praise and Glory." "O Lord: Shower Thy blessings upon Muhammad and upon the followers of Muhammad even as Thou showered Thy blessings upon Abraham and upon the followers of Abraham; verily Thou art the Possessor of Praise and Glory."

**A Holy Brotherhood** The above are the words of the benediction which goes up to Heaven at all hours of the day and night from the heart of a grateful people. For this benediction forms part of the daily prayers which every Moslem has to perform at least five times a day. And as day follows night in a perpetual swirl round the earth, the prayer ascends in an unceasing stream to the throne of the Almighty, invoking His mercies and blessings upon the Best of Men—Muhammad—a distinctive privilege shared by no other of the children of Adam. And not an invidious distinction; for Muhammad to us symbolizes a type, the type of the Perfect Man the highest tribute offered by the grateful Earth to its Glorious Maker. In him we all have our part. He is the best representative of the race. He has demonstrated the acme of the spiritual possibilities of man. Any praise offered to him does not therefore detract from the just dues of others. Rather, honour to the representative means honour to the race and to all its members. When therefore we praise Muhammad, we *ipso facto* praise Jesus and Krishna and Buddha and the whole galaxy of illuminated souls who have led benighted humanity from darkness towards light. In fact, we sing a hallelujah to ourselves and to the race. For we feel that we are not strangers, that we are related to him. If he has gone before us and attained to the Elysian heights of Glory, praise be to

God. We are his kinsmen, His Glory will have its reflection in us.

Let us therefore banish from our hearts all thoughts of partiality. You make no distinction between the prophets, says the Quran. They are a common brotherhood all. Disrespect to one means insult to all. Praise to one means honour to all.

**Precepts Actualised in Life** 'Describe to me the character of the Prophet,' asked one of the disciples of

Ayesha, the beloved wife with whom the Holy Prophet is said to have left half of his teachings. 'Have you not read the Quran,' answered the noble lady, 'and what is the Quran but a pen-picture of the Holy Prophet?' Thus the Holy Prophet to us is the personification of Islam, a concrete embodiment of the principles from the airy nothingness of the perfect idea—on earth unseen or only found to adorn the poetic page. Here is a real living man, palpitating in flesh and blood, awake to the problems of the work-a-day world, who nevertheless radiates truth, peace and joy.

**Multifarious Aspects of Life** Such is the man whose memory we are gathered today to celebrate. And it will do us good. For the more we

know of him the more will we recognize him to be our Kin, the Great Model which it would be worth our while to imitate. But to study him is difficult. For where is the vision which will comprehend at a glance the whole of this Mighty Himalayas! At least we can consider only particular aspects of his character and try to build up laboriously a working model for our everyday use. Like the climbers of the Everest we must approach him with reverence and earnest preparation and then too we shall be foiled time and again in our attempt to reach the summit. But blessed is he who perseveres for sure enough his efforts will be crowned with success.

**Historicity** Now there are innumerable aspects of this Great Life, each of which will invite and repay a most careful and life-long study. For example, the historicity of the Holy Prophet is a unique trait, which is shared by no other life ancient or modern. Born and bred among our illiterate people, how is it that we find recorded every detail of his life which is worth knowing. Incidents of the battlefield, incidents of the forum, incidents of the friendly assembly, incidents of the dining table and even incidents of the bedroom

have all been recorded and preserved with such succinct details as set the students of history simply wondering at the richness and plentitude of the material at his disposal. Surely the Divine Disposer of events must have meant that whatever else in the world might perish the memory of this Man must not die from the minds of men.

**Practicality** Then there is the aspect of practicality. Here is a teacher of the 'Middle Path' who never preaches what no man can ever practice, who by being unlettered escapes the gossamer expositions of airy philosophy, whose strong point is a sturdy common sense, who never loses sight of the realities of life and is ever true to the kindred points of heaven and home. He has been mistakenly criticised as indifferent to the arts. He indeed decries the artificial school of poets who do not find this world beautiful enough and would employ their fancy to build one more beautiful and perfect. He however approves of the realistic school of poets who find a divine beauty and perfection in this world of labour and travail, where the sun, the moon and the stars hold their never-ceasing round and love and trust and faith, warm our homes and give us happiness and joy and the strength of sacrifice.

**Simplicity** There is also the aspect of simplicity, of freedom from conventionality and cant. Here was a King who mended his own shoes, who was his own servant, whose time at home was spent in assisting his wives and in the discharge of domestic duties, who is reported to have left the injunction: "Listen to me, again, listen to me, simplicity in life is a part of faith." Here was a religious teacher who was above a meticulous regard for forms. He is reported to have said: "Sometimes it happens that I stand for prayers and wish to make it long, but the sound of some child's cry reaches my ears and the thought that I might be inconveniencing the mother makes me cut short the prayer." This is perhaps a confession which very few of our present-day teachers will make bold to admit. There is also the report from Anas that the Holy Prophet would sometimes offer his prayers with shoes on—a thing considered outrageous in the present day. In fact here was a leader who was never a slave of the body of prestige.

**Practical Success** Then again he may be considered in the light of actual achievements. Here was a prophet who created a nation. Out of the sands of the desert,

so stark and naked, which repelled the sight by its sheer sterility and nakedness, he created a new firmament of Stars, in which disported Kings, lawgivers and statesmen, warriors, conquerors, governors, philosophers, teachers, doctors, seers, sages and saints, in fact, a complete host of new orbs which altogether changed the face of the globe; a transformation unique and unexampled in the whole history of the race. And if humanity has failed to keep up to that height and has sunk to the level of the sands again, he has left with us the secret that will repeat the old magic and effect the retransformation whenever occasion will arise.

Such and similar aspects are the fitting studies for the historian and the philosopher. To me the aspect which has the greatest appeal is the 'Modernity' of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). He is the teacher of the day. He is the leader of the hour. His banner is the rallying point of all good souls. His name is the watch-word of open victory.

**Teacher** Humanity advances through the ages and every **of the Age** age presents its own peculiar problems for humanity to solve. In the Greek legends there is the story of a demon who used to put questions to its prey and would devour it if no correct answer could be given. Even so does the age put its own questions to race and these the race must answer correctly or perish. And generations do indeed perish until the teacher arrives who answers the questions correctly and saves himself and the world from destruction. Thus is recognized the teacher of the day, the leader of the hour. With him lies shelter and safety. Without him awaits death and destruction.

Thus to discover the teacher of the age one has to discover what are the burning questions of the hour and which is the teacher who has answered them to any reasonable degree of satisfaction. I have purposely qualified my words, because, as may be easily understood, the answers given by the teacher may not always fully conform to our own notions. What therefore is to be expected is that the answers should have a reasonable degree of support from our intellect and our morals and that there should be some practical demonstration of the correctness of the solutions. These three cross references furnish the criteria for judging the truth of all such teachers.

(To be concluded in our next issue)

# TO OUR READERS

By the help of Allah, we publish another issue of The Moslem Sunrise as a quarterly. Since we are now publishing the magazine quarterly we make an earnest appeal to you to do your utmost in extending your help and co-operation.

If you are a new reader, we would appreciate your subscription; if an old subscriber, then won't you remit your subscription for the coming year and thus help maintain this work that Allah has most surely blessed?

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